

**Report of the President's High Level Envoy on the Universalization
of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention, His Royal Highness
Prince Mired Raad Al Hussein of Jordan**

**Standing Committee on the General Status and Operation of the
Convention**

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Excellencies, dear friends:

Two years ago when I presided over the Convention, I sought to follow in the path of my predecessor, Caroline Millar of Australia, by using my presidency to promote universalization.

One of the main lessons I learned during my term was that leaders of States not parties need to be engaged in order for us to make progress in this area. While efforts at an officials' level must continue and while non-governmental advocacy in many cases is vital, getting to a decision on accession means getting to the decision makers.

I was pleased that this lesson was reflected in the documents we adopted in Cartagena. As others have recalled, we agreed in Cartagena "attracting further adherents to the Convention has grown more difficult in recent years implying that future efforts to promote acceptance of the Convention and its norms will require intensive effort at as high a level as possible."

Reflecting this lesson in words is one thing. Turning it into action is another. I am committed to doing my part and therefore I was honoured to have been asked by Ambassador Eckey to serve this year as her "Special Envoy on the Universalization of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention."

It is my pleasure to report to you on the activities I have undertaken so far this year and to share some observations with you.

My goal this year is to engage as many States not parties as possible. Priorities for the use of finite time and financial resources are established in coordination with the Contact Group Coordinator, the Presidency and the ICBL and are based upon reaching out to those States not parties that have kept an open mind on the Convention and are interested in a

serious dialogue in overcoming their perceived remaining barriers to accession.

To date I have carried out two visits: to the Lao PDR and to the United States of America. In both cases there is a fresh new outlook toward the Convention and serious efforts to review existing policy are underway.

With respect to the Lao PDR, I met with the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defence as well as with Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Director of the Lao PDR's National UXO Regulatory Authority. Laos has clearly seen the benefits of engagement in a multilateral process through its leadership within the movement to ban cluster munitions.

With the First Meeting of the States Parties of the CCM set to take place in Vientiane in November, there is now a wonderful opportunity for the Lao PDR also to commit to leadership on anti-personnel mines. I would urge those States that are parties to both Conventions to express to the Lao PDR their hope that Lao will announce its accession to the AP Mine Ban Convention in advance of or during the Vientiane meeting.

With respect to the USA, I met with two special advisors to President Obama who are leading the USA's landmines policy review process. In addition, I met with several assistant and deputy assistant secretaries from the State Department, Pentagon and the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

With the USA having demonstrated over the past two decades that it does not consider anti-personnel mines to factor into how it engages in war and defence, the costs to the USA of accession arguably are negligible. The challenge for all of us is to ensure that the USA can now see the benefits of accession.

In particular, the USA needs to hear directly from States Parties...

- that we very much want the USA to be part of our movement,
- that the USA's global leadership would be key in getting other States to join the Convention, and,
- that we expect no measure short of the USA making the same solemn commitment we that have made – to never again use, produce, stockpile or transfer anti-personnel mines.

In addition to these visits, I have met in Geneva with the Permanent Representatives of Finland, Georgia, Nepal and Sri Lanka. As well, I have begun to make plans to visit Sri Lanka in August and Mongolia in October. I am also hopeful that I could schedule visits prior to the 10MSP to Nepal, Bahrain and the Federated States of Micronesia.

In terms of observations to date, I would say that this effort is working but it is clear that high level engagement of States not parties must continue past this year. A onetime effort will not on its own produce results. Rather sustained, strategic efforts are required between now and the Third Review Conference.

In addition, I would remark that this effort is working thanks to the collaboration and support of a wide range of actors:

- In Washington, we were grateful for the in-depth background information provided to us by Steve Goose of Human Rights Watch.
- In Vientiane, we were accompanied by the Embassy of Japan and I would more generally wish to credit Japan for its ongoing actions to promote universalization in the Asia-Pacific and elsewhere.
- Also in Vientiane, we received valuable on the ground support from the UNDP. And, in making plans to visit Kathmandu, Mary Sack and the rest of the UN Mine Action Team in Nepal have been central to our effort.
- As we look toward our visit to Mongolia, we are already grateful for the role played by the Canadian Ambassador in Ulaanbaatar for her support.

A final observation I wish to share is that maintaining a cooperative spirit in the work of this Convention is important to promoting universalization. States not parties closely observe our work here in Geneva and at informal regional events. They want to be part of movement that features States and other entities collaborating with one another and working together to overcome the complexities to implementation.

That is, today's State not party is tomorrow's State Party. Our best selling feature is that if they join our movement they will become a contributing part of a rare example of multilateralism working the way it should.